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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

INFORMATION FROM

FOREIGN DOCUMENTS OR RADIO BROADCASTS

CD NO.

COUNTRY Poland

SUBJECT Economic - Forestry

HOW PUBLISHED Semimonthly periodical

WHERE PUBLISHED Warsaw

DATE PUBLISHED 15/30 Jun 1950

LANGUAGE Polish

DATE OF INFORMATION 1950

DATE DIST. 27 Dec 1950

NO. OF PAGES 3

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

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SOURCE Zycie Gospodarcze.SOCIALIZED FOREST MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS IN POLAND

Poland's forests comprise about 23 percent of its total area, or 7.3 million hectares, but only 19 percent are productive. The productive area is inadequate for economic purposes and for the country's current requirements. For efficient operations Poland's forests ought to comprise 25 percent of its total area. A larger percentage of forested area might be achieved at the expense of the arable land and would be injurious and unnecessary.

Two wars and the inefficient management of two generations have reduced the average yearly timber growth per hectare to 1.7 cubic meters or one half of the 1914 timber growth. The condition is further impaired by the improper distribution of age groups and the small percentage -- 12.9 percent -- of hardwood trees which was the result of inefficient management by the capitalistic administrations. The 12.9 percent of hardwood trees consists of 4 percent oak and ash, 3.6 percent beech and hornbeam, 2.8 percent alder, 2.2 percent birch, and 0.3 percent aspen, poplar, and others. The 87.1 percent of soft wood trees is comprised of 75.6 percent pine, 8.8 percent spruce, and 2.7 percent fir.

The proportion of the stand which is 80 years old, or saw-log age, is 9 percent or less than normal.

The administration is gradually introducing a new method of selective logging instead of cutting down one entire area each year. The new method will enrich the quality of forest growth and increase the varieties. It will also increase growth and forest production, especially production of hardwoods; it will increase resistance to pests, decrease the danger of fire, and greatly reduce the costs of reforestation. This new policy does not conflict with the program of cutting for pest control, which assures a steady supply of high-quality raw material for the lumber industry.

The lumber shortage affects all industries based on lumber and those to which lumber is indispensable. However, the lumber shortage caused by demands of the systematically expanding national economy, rather than by reduced timber cutting, is not critical and will not hinder industrial production.

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To prevent any drastic consequences from the lumber shortage, strict economy in the use of lumber should be enforced. The forest administration should make a constant effort to increase the percentage of timber for manufacturing purposes and reduce the percentage of firewood. The quantity of firewood was reduced from 25 percent in the economic year 1946 - 1947 to 18 percent in 1948 - 1949. In 1950 it is planned to produce 84.5 percent of lumber for manufacturing purposes and reduce the production of firewood to 15.5 percent.

The use of processed wood should be reduced and consumption limited to the less valuable woods whenever possible. To accomplish this it will be necessary to carefully scrutinize specifications in the orders received. Waste should be avoided and scraps should be used up to the best advantage in production. Lumber exposed to decay, mould, fire, and other destructive forces should be protected by chemical treatment to extend its life.

In the first 5 years after World War I, the average annual reforestation was 17,124 hectares; in the first 5 years after World War II, the average was 73,099 hectares. During the Three-Year Plan, the average yearly reforestation was 102,700 hectares. In the logging seasons between 1944 - 1945 and 1948 - 1949, the total reforestation was 365,497 hectares of which 308,166 hectares was reforested during the Three-Year Plan. The following index shows the extent of reforestation in the past several years: taking 1946 as 100, in 1947 reforestation reached 148, in 1948 - 207, and in 1949 - 371. The total figures include about 100,000 hectares of natural growth.

Large-scale research projects are contemplated for the utilization of all waste scraps, except sawdust. Pressboard, which has almost an unlimited use in the manufacture of furniture and in construction, is a product of the new method of utilizing scraps. In many cases, it replaces plywood or linoleum, tile, and other materials.

Pressboard produced from waste scraps of inferior wood is a very valuable material. It is remarkable for its strength and resistance to atmospheric conditions and is easily worked. There are two kinds of pressboard, the soft board used as insulating and decorating material and the hard board used for furniture and construction.

The former organization of state forests was inefficient. The Ministry of Forestry had two functions: it directed productive operations and was at the same time its own supervisory agency. In practice, the Ministry of Forestry limited its operations to management and neglected its functions as state supervisory authority.

The forest administration was basically reorganized on 1 January 1950 according to the law of 20 December 1949 concerning the state forest economy. Under the new setup, the Central Management of the Ministry of Forestry directs the economic policy within the ministry's sphere of authority, as described in the decree of 5 December 1947, and as provided by the law of 7 April 1949 concerning the protection of forest growth and the supervision of forestry, lumbering, and hunting, and education and practical training in forestry carried on by the institutions and establishments under the direct supervision of the ministry.

By order of the Minister of Forestry issued on 27 December 1949, the following organization was created on 1 January 1950:

1. Sixteen large state forest regions corresponding to former administrative geographical divisions. Later, these regions will be set up as engineers. By 1 January 1951, 70 small regions will be organized. Additional regions will be organized after 1 January 1951 to make a total of 142.

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2. The CZLP (Central Administration of State Forests), a state enterprise created to direct, coordinate, supervise, and inspect the activities of the state forest regions and to handle forest management. As the number of state forest regions increases, the CZLP will create field agencies to carry out the tasks associated with the area assigned to each.

On the basis of the decree of 3 January 1947, the following state corporations were organized on 1 January 1950:

1. Thirty seven lumber regions for the production of lumber and other forest products obtained from secondary establishments connected with sawmills.

2. Plants for the manufacture of plywood and pressboard, destructive distillation, resin and turpentine, resin distilleries.

3. CZPL (Central Administration of the Forest Industries), a state enterprise organized to coordinate, supervise, inspect, and direct the economic operations of the above-named enterprises. The CZPL may set up regional agencies.

The following service corporations were organized within the reorganization of 1 January 1950:

1. "Paged" State Central Lumber Office, whose sphere of operations includes: (a) the processing of long wood, (b) land and water transportation of logs and processed lumber except the transportation of logs from the forests, (c) domestic and foreign shipping, transshipment and storage, (d) distribution of lumber according to plan, (e) the purchase and sale of lumber and wood products within the country, (f) import and export of lumber and wood products.

2. "Las" State Central Office of Forest Products Except Wood has the task of: (a) gathering forest fruits, mushrooms, herbs, honey, and pine needles, (b) handling forest products of meadows, ponds, lakes, and raising fur-bearing animals; also, cultivation and collection of osier, (c) canning forest products, (d) sale of forest products under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Internal Trade, (e) import and export of products covered in item "d" with the approval of the Minister of Foreign Trade.

The Bureau of Forestry Projects was created to work out and execute plans for industrial construction and transportation facilities for enterprises under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Forestry.

All enterprises mentioned above will be under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Forestry.

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